

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending in this application. Claims 1 and 4 are independent.

By this Amendment, independent claims 1 and 4 are amended to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, Fig. 4A. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-4, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over EP 1 101 910 to Yamada; and rejects claims 5, 6 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Yamada. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Claims 1 and 4 are amended to recite additional features, as outlined above. For example, claim 1 is amended to recite that "the protrusion portions have substantially the same height." Claim 4 is amended to recite additional features. Yamada does not disclose or render obvious the subject matter recited in claims 1 and 4.

The honeycomb structure of Yamada has moderate unevenness and undulation on outer walls; therefore, joining planes are hard to come off (see Yamada at paragraph [0011]). Adhesive strength between honeycomb segments is raised by engaging unevenness on outer walls with adhesive layers.

On the other hand, in the present application, protrusion portions control moisture movement from the adhesive layer to the honeycomb segment through the adhesion surface, and then interfaces with high adhesive strength are formed on adhesion surfaces in a fine balance. The protrusion portions are formed on the adhesion surface for purpose of moisture movement and adhesive strength.

The height of protrusion portions in the present application is substantially same. Therefore, the amount of moisture in the thinner portions of the adhesive layers is also same. Thus, the moisture of the thinner portions of adhesive layers is absorbed equally. As a result,

a honeycomb structure comprising interfaces with high adhesive strength having equal adhesive strength is obtained.

In cases where the height of protrusion portions is not same, the amount of moisture in the thinner portions of adhesive layers is different depending on the height of the protrusion portions. For example, in cases where a protrusion portion is high, the amount of moisture in the thinner portions of adhesive layers is expected to be less. In contrast, in cases where a protrusion portion is low, the amount of moisture in the thinner portions of adhesive layers is expected to be more. Thus, the amount of moisture at adhesion surfaces opposite to a protrusion portions absorb is different. As a result, adhesive strength is not always equal. The honeycomb structure that has the same height of protrusion portions is more durable than the honeycomb structure that has different heights of protrusion portions.

For at least the above reasons, Yamada does not disclose or render obvious the subject matter recited in claims 1 and 4, as amended, and claims 2, 3 and 5-9 depending therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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